



# **For the Many or the Few: The Initiative, Public Policy, and American Democracy (American Politics and Political Economy Series)**

*John G. Matsusaka*

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Direct democracy is alive and well in the United States. Citizens are increasingly using initiatives and referendums to take the law into their own hands, overriding their elected officials to set tax, expenditure, and social policies. John G. Matsusaka's *For the Many or the Few* provides the first even-handed and historically based treatment of the subject.

Drawing upon a century of evidence, Matsusaka argues against the popular belief that initiative measures are influenced by wealthy special interest groups that neglect the majority view. Examining demographic, political, and opinion data, he demonstrates how the initiative process brings about systematic changes in tax and expenditure policies of state and local governments that are generally supported by the citizens. He concludes that, by and large, direct democracy in the form of the initiative process works for the benefit of the many rather than the few.

An unprecedented, comprehensive look at the historical, empirical, and theoretical components of how initiatives function within our representative democracy to increase political competition while avoiding the tyranny of the majority, *For the Many or the Few* is a most timely and definitive work.

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